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ABSTRACT

A statewide, longitudinal study is being conducted by Los Angeles Pierce College in order to investigate several specified areas related to the students enrolled at California community colleges. The study report, which presents only Fall 1978 results, first provides background to the study and its goals and objectives. It then details the methods and procedures used in selecting the 15 institutions involved in the study, sampling, interviewing, collecting data, training staff, and analyzing data. The following section presents the findings of the study in the areas of: (1) attrition patterns (reasons given, student sampling, students with zero active units at census, and sample students' reasons for dropping classes): (2) demographics (sex, age, marital status, dependents, and ethnicity): (3) employment information (occupational status, hours of employment, and wages): (4) academic information (last school attended, highest grade completed, years out of school, and current academic status and plans): and (5) special student groups (ethnic minority, physically handicapped, educationally disadvantaged, financially disadvantaged, non-English speakers, displaced homemakers, and nontraditional majors). The last two sections cover objectives not met in the first semester/quarter and telephone interview observations. Findings are based on responses from 6,246 students. (JP)

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STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL STUDY

Report on Academic Year 1978 - 1979

Part I - Fall Results

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STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL STUDY

Report on Academic Year 1978-1979

Part I Fall Results

Funded by the Chancellor's Office
California Community Colleges
under P.L. 94-482, Title II, Part A
Subpart 3

Project # 19-64741 - 3 - 8 453

Russell Hunter
M. Stephen Sheldon

Los Angeles Pierce College

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STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL STUDY

Part 1 - Fall Results

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Project Director

Russell Hunter
Project Administrator

Participating Colleges	Consortium Members
Antelope Valley College	Frank Roberts
Bakersfield College	David C. Scott Jim Opperman
Cerritos College	Kathleen McDannell Roger Holland
Contra Costa College	Phyllis Goldman
El Camino College	Jerry Garlock
Evergreen Valley College	Jon Kangas Nancy Reichel
Foothill College	Nate Boortz Nilo Sarmiento
Golden West College	Rick Forsberg
Imperial Valley College	Demetrius Karathanos Dalia Rodriguez
Los Angeles City College	Ben Gold
Los Angeles Pierce College	Steve Sheldon
Sacramento City College	Frank Navarette Valerie Hytholt
Santa Ana College	Julie Slark
Shasta College	Walter Brooks Coleen Zelozny
Southwestern College	Allan MacDougall

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BACKGROUND

During the academic year 1977-78, Los Angeles Pierce College began a proposed three-year longitudinal study. The stated purposes were to:

1. Make an in-depth examination of the major reasons for attrition from classes and from college.
2. Determine the real reasons for students to be attending Pierce and their self-perceptions in terms of their education and training.
3. Determine on a long-range basis the effects of Pierce College on the lives of the students attending Pierce.

Funding was provided by the Los Angeles Community College District to provide one half-time project administrator and student assistants.

The overall design of the study was to select a representative sample of all students admitted to Pierce in the fall of 1977 and to interview those who dropped classes or left school to determine their reasons for withdrawing. These interviews were continued in the spring of 1978 to determine the reasons for student withdrawal from college in spring semester and to examine the academic records of both those who continued and those who withdrew from college.

The results relevant to the present study were: (1) that the sample procedures (use of the last two digits of the student identification number) provided a sample whose characteristics yielded a 1 percent standard error of the Pierce population as a whole and in some respects proved also to be representative of

the Los Angeles Community College District as a whole (e.g., age, sex), (2) that the telephone interview and follow-up techniques developed for the study were effective, producing an 82 percent response rate, (3) that it was possible to develop sets of student categories and rules for classifying student responses which were reliable across interviewers, and (4) that it was possible to develop a series of procedures which would enable a number of colleges to collect common data in a standard fashion.

These findings (Sheldon & Hunter, 1978) led researchers in other areas of the state to encourage the investigators to seek funding for a longitudinal project of a similar nature which would be conducted on a number of campuses in California. With the support of Southern California Community College Institutional Research Association (SCCCIRA), Northern California Institutional Research Group (NOR CAL), the Research and Development Commission (R & D) of the California Community and Junior College Association (CCJCA), the Center for the Study of Community Colleges, and members of the staff of the State Chancellor's Office, the proposal for the current study was written and funded under VEA, Subpart 3.

GOALS

The goals of the Statewide Longitudinal Study were:

1. To provide detailed information about pertinent aspects of the student bodies of California Community Colleges.

2. To provide information about the effects of college programs on the lives of the students.

3. To provide further information on the efficacy of small sampling in completing a useful and meaningful longitudinal study.

4. To provide information about the feasibility of using a small-sample, longitudinal study for supplying data to state and federal agencies valid for reporting purposes and for providing individual community colleges with a model to use in answering questions of a local nature.

5. To provide information on the factors within certain vocational programs that inhibit Limited-English-Speaking and Non-English-Speaking (LES/NES) students from enrolling.

6. To provide assistance in identifying needed curriculum and services for Vocational Education programs for disadvantaged and/or handicapped students, displaced homemakers, single heads of household, homemakers working part-time or for students enrolled in majors which are nontraditional for their sex.

The objectives developed from these long-range goals are listed below.

OBJECTIVES

The numbers of the objectives listed below refer back to the numbers of the goals described immediately above.

1A. To produce frequency distributions and cross-tabulations of descriptive and demographic student data and to compute appropriate descriptive statistics.

1B. To report detailed reasons given for specific student actions such as:

a. Being admitted to college but never enrolling in courses.

b. Enrolling in courses but never attending classes.

c. Attending classes, but withdrawing or being excluded before Census Week.

1C. To determine existing sex, race, or age bias in occupational programs.

2A. To compare job success of vocational and nonvocational students after one, two and three years, as measured by:

a. Rate of employment in field studied.

b. Skill level of job in field studied.

c. Salary of job in field studied.

2B. To compare and contrast perceptions concerning the value of community college experience among students.

3A. To compare demographic data of the samples drawn with those of the populations of the participating colleges and the state as a whole.

4A. To determine the similarity of federal and state reports when the data are estimated from the total student body and when they are extracted from the sample.

5A. To provide detailed information emanating from the students themselves of the factors within the local education agencies that are perceived by LES/NES students to be discriminatory.

6A. To provide detailed information emanating from the disadvantaged and handicapped students regarding the specific changes in curriculum and services that will make vocational education programs more attractive to them and more feasible for them to complete.

6B. To provide detailed information on the ways programs can be changed so that displaced homemakers, single heads of household, homemakers working part time and students in programs nontraditional for their sex can enroll in and complete programs satisfactorily.

LIMITATIONS

The generalizability of the study will be limited by the following factors:

1. Because of the longitudinal nature of the study, the Consortium (see below) elected to sample only first-time students at each college. Consequently, though the sample may be representative of first-time students,

it is probably not representative of student bodies as a whole.

2. Given the number of colleges participating and the distances among them, there will be discrepancies in the application of the rules developed for telephone interviewers and college coordinators, resulting in unavoidable error variance, though not enough to seriously bias the results.

3. Though telephone interviewing makes it possible to avoid the response bias built into mail questionnaire studies, it is recognized that telephone techniques will produce some bias. It is believed that (unlike the case of mail response bias) this may randomize out and will affect data less.

PLANNING AND CONDUCT

The first steps in planning the study were made at a meeting in Sacramento attended by members of the State Chancellor's staff and representatives of 20 colleges in California. From these 20 colleges, 15 were chosen for participation in the study according to the following criteria:

1. There should be approximately proportional sectional presentation.

2. The colleges chosen should contain representatives of urban, suburban, and rural colleges.

3. The colleges chosen should provide a cross-section of different socioeconomic groups.

4. The colleges chosen should include a representative sample of all ethnic groups.

5. There must be on each college campus an experieced and competent institutional research person to conduct the study.

The colleges chosen and the names of the project coordinators and administrators appear below:

COLLEGE	PROJECT COORDINATOR	PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR
Northern California		
Shasta College	Walter Brooks	Colleen Zelozny
San Francisco Bay Area		
Contra Costa College	Phyllis Goldman	
Evergreen Valley College	John Kangas	Nancy Reichel
Foothill College	Nate Boortz	Nilo Sarmiento
San Joaquin Valley		
Bakersfield College	David C. Scott	Jim Opperman
Sacramento City College	Frank Navarette	Valerie Hytholt
Los Angeles/Orange County		
Los Angeles City	Ben Gold	
Los Angeles Pierce	Steve Sheldon	
El Camino College	Jerry Garlock	Cecile Gaudini
Golden West College	Rick Forsberg	
Cerritos College	Kathleen McDannel	Roger Holland
Santa Ana College	Julie Slark	
Desert Areas		
Antelope Valley College	Frank Roberts	
Imperial Valley College	Demetrius Karathanos	Dalia Rodriguez
Southern Area		
Southwestern College	Allan MacDougall	
Other Consortium Members		
William Anderson	State Chancellor's Office	
Robert Daly	SCCCIRA (Santa Ana College)	
William Morris	State Chancellor's Office	
Paul Preising	NOR CAL (San Jose District)	

Robert J. Thompson	NOR CAL (Foothill de Anza District)
Angelo Segalla	R & D Commission of CCJCA (Golden West College)
Arthur Cohen	Center for the Study of Community Colleges
Shirley McGillicuddy	SAM Consortium
Florence Brawer	ERIC Clearinghouse of Community Colleges
Ernest Berg	California Commission Junior College Assn.
Buster S. Sano	State Chancellor's Office
Tom Tanner	State Chancellor's Office
William Boakes	State Chancellor's Office

NOR CAL and SCCCIRA were more heavily represented in the Consortium than the above list shows because a number of project coordinators were also members of the two organizations. The management staff consisted of a Project Director, Project Administrator, and clerical staff, all based in Los Angeles.

The Consortium provided basic policy decisions at four statewide meetings (June 1978, September 1978, November 1978, and April 1979) and a series of regional meetings held in San Francisco and Los Angeles International Airports. The policies that were established were carried out by the Pierce project staff and disseminated to the Consortium through the following documents:

1. Fall Project Manual (93 pages)
2. Bi-weekly Newsletters (15 issues)
3. Spring Project Manual (40 pages)

Copies of all are available on request.

JUNE MEETING

Practical planning of the study was begun at a two-day planning meeting conducted in Westwood, California, on June 12 and 13, 1978. Attendees made basic decisions about sampling procedures, data collection and transmittal procedures, and data analysis. These decisions are discussed below. The following variables were selected for collection and analysis:

1. Accessibility of respondent
2. Cooperativeness of respondent
3. Enrollment group
4. Sex
5. Year of birth
6. Class hours (day or evening)
7. Reasons for withdrawal from classes
8. Units signed up for
9. Units attempted
10. Classes signed up for
11. Classes attempted
12. Last school attended
13. Type of school (public or private)
14. Time out of school
15. Projected length of stay at college
16. College objectives
17. Job for which in training
18. Major (as stated in interview, as recorded on college records, SAM major)
19. Nontraditional major status
20. Marital status
21. Dependents
22. Occupational status (skill level of employment)
23. Hours of employment
24. Salary
25. Occupation previous year
26. Handicap status
27. Financial disadvantage status
28. Educational disadvantage status
29. LES/NES status
30. Native language
31. Ethnicity
32. Displaced homemaker status
33. Counseling needs as perceived by respondent

Following this June 1978 meeting, the staff developed the Fall Project Manual containing detailed instructions for sampling

definitions of variables, instructions for data collection and storage, interview guides, and data sheets.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

At a one-day meeting in San Francisco in September, the Consortium offered final critiques on the second draft of the data collection instruments. Data collection began in September or October for the participating colleges depending upon opening dates. Problems of data collection were resolved in meetings with Consortium members from the north in San Francisco and from the south in Santa Ana. Problem solutions and necessary edits of data collection instruments were communicated to participating colleges by newsletters.

NOVEMBER MEETING

In November, the full Consortium met again in Los Angeles to plan for spring data collection. Consortium members chose follow-up questions on problems identified in the fall, and added items on goal attainment as viewed by respondents, and the relationship of their current job to their vocational program. In addition, items were added relating to the fall academic performance of the students in the study, the spring study list selected by the respondents, and reasons for either dropping classes or withdrawing from school.

APRIL MEETING

The final meeting of the year took place at Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove. The Consortium devoted its attention at that meeting to (1) analysis of Fall 1978 data, discussion of Spring 1979 data collection problems and planning for Fall 1979 data collection.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The methods and procedures used to conduct the study were described in two documents, the Fall Project Manual and the Spring Project Manual. The Fall Project Manual covered sampling, interviewing, data list, instructions for data transmittal, telephone contact and interview techniques, staff selection and training procedures and appendices giving examples of Interview Guides, Data Sheets, Definitions of Categories, a codebook for use in developing computer programs, and the computer program used in data analysis. The Spring Project Manual contained Spring Interview Instructions, descriptions of new variables, and the Spring Questionnaire itself.

SAMPLING

The objective of the sampling procedures was to produce a sample with a 4 percent confidence interval of all newly admitted students in each of the participating colleges for Fall 1978. New students were defined as those who had not previously been admitted to the participating college though they might have attended other colleges; high school honors program students were excluded from the sample. Sample sizes were chosen by (1) using the total of First Time Freshmen as reported on Form CCAF131, and (2) using the 4 percent column on Page 71 of the Student Accountability Model (SAM) Manual (Gold, 1978) to select a sample size 200 percent of the recommended sample size to make up for expected loss of those students who had Zero Active Units at census (ZAUS).

SAMPLE SUBSETS

Each of the students selected was considered to belong to one of four subgroups:

1. Students who were admitted but never enrolled in classes (ZAUS 1).

2. Students who were admitted, enrolled in class, but never attended (ZAUS 2).

3. Students who were admitted, enrolled in class, attended, but withdrew from all classes before census week (ZAUS 3).

4. Students who had active units at census week (Sample Students).

Subgroups 1-3 were "ZAUS." Subgroup 4 was later divided into groups which will be defined below. ZAUS were interviewed only to determine their reasons for withdrawal, but were not considered part of the sample to be followed over the life of the study. Subgroup 4 was the Sample.

SCHEDULE OF SAMPLING

The Extended Sample (ZAUS + Sample Students) was drawn at each college during the fourth or fifth week of the fall semester or quarter, and ZAUS 1 and ZAUS 2 students were identified. Two weeks after the first Census Week, the balance of the ZAUS students and the members of the Sample on whom longitudinal work was to be done were identified. The dates of the sampling varied across campuses because of differing opening dates.

A recommended method of sampling that was used on most campuses involved the use of the student's identification number, frequently the same as the student's social security number. Before the Pierce College study, it had been established that the last two digits of

the social security number were unbiased. Because these digits run from 00 to 99, any pair of digits (e.g., 62) will result in a slightly less than 1 percent population (allowing for those few students who lack, or decline to give, social security numbers). Most of the colleges in the Sample used this system, though they had the freedom to use any system that would enable them to draw a representative sample of first-time admittees.

SCHEDULE OF INTERVIEWS

ZAUS 1 and 2 students were interviewed as soon as the Extended Sample was drawn and they were identified. Using the guide shown in the Fall Project Manual, interviewers collected minimal demographic data and reasons for nonenrollment in classes, for nonattendance, or for withdrawal. Two weeks were allotted for these calls. If there were more ZAUS 1 and 2 students than could be called, then 40 students, or 10 percent of ZAUS students, whichever was larger, were used.

ZAUS 3 students, who could not be contacted until after Census Week, were called during the two weeks following the 8th week of the semester. Two weeks were given for calling these students as well.

Interviews with Sample Students began immediately after interviews with ZAUS 3 students were complete, and were continued until all students who were "reachable" and cooperative had been interviewed. "Reachable" students were those with whom contact could be made by telephone or other means (see below). Cooperative students were those who completed the interview in such a manner

that the interviewer felt that the responses were credible. Respondents (1) who gave the impression that they were not telling the truth or (2) who terminated the interview because of unwillingness to provide information, were considered uncooperative; their data were not used in the study. "Decline to state" responses on items judged to be potentially sensitive issues (e.g., wage or salary, ethnic status) did not qualify the respondent for noncooperative status providing other responses appeared to come willingly and the information was internally consistent.

Students who were difficult to reach were traced using the techniques developed in the Pierce College Longitudinal Study. In this study, 18 percent of the subjects were not reached because they had given wrong telephone numbers, had no telephones, had their telephones disconnected without referral numbers, or never answered their telephones. First, the respondent were sent short notes with return postcards enclosed on which they could give their current telephone numbers. If this did not work, notes were sent via their instructors asking that the students stop by the office for an interview.

DATA COLLECTION AND DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

To ensure that common data were collected across all campuses in a standard fashion, individual colleges were provided with interview guides, data collection sheets, lists of definitions of terms, and coding sheets. All these documents are in the appendices of the Fall Project Manual.

Interview Guides were detailed instruction manuals outlining (1) the questions to be asked of each respondent, (2) an explanation of the intent behind each item, and (3) an outline of the response categories for each item. One guide was to be provided to each interviewer. They were to use them as continual reference while conducting the interviews.

Data Collection Sheets were the instruments on which the data collected was initially written. These also contained the appropriate response categories for each item; boxes were provided for interviewers to write the appropriate codes.

Definitions of Terms were lists of response categories (e.g., Reasons for Dropping Classes, Skill Level of Job) with written definitions for the interviewers to use in fitting open-ended responses (e.g., "Why did you drop classes?" "Because my car quit"; "What kind of a job do you hold?" "Gas station attendant") to response categories (e.g., Transportation; Unskilled Job) that were amenable to qualitative analysis. Definitions of terms were written for Reasons for Class Drop, College Objectives, Major Codes (CID Codes), Nontraditional Major, Occupational Status (i.e., level of skill required on job), Physical Handicap, Financial Disadvantage, Financial Aids, Educational Disadvantage, Ethnicity, and Displaced Homemaker. Where possible (e.g., with Physical Handicap), regulations and definitions used in reporting to the federal government were provided as part of the definitions.

Code Sheets, adaptations of standard IBM coding forms, were provided to those colleges having no keypunch facilities. Most colleges, however, were able to keypunch their own data.

DATA TRANSMITTAL

Three sets of data were transmitted to the State Project Office: (1) ZAUS data, (2) the first 50 cases collected on the sample, and (3) the remaining Sample data. Most data were in the form of duplicate decks of punched cards. The original decks were held on the originating campus. Those who had no keypunch facilities sent xerographic copies of their data coding sheets, and the cards were punched at the State Project Office (at L. A. Pierce College).

1. ZAUS data were sent first, and analyzed separately because ZAUS students were not to be followed beyond the intial interview.

2. Frequency distributions were run on the first 50 cases sent in by each college to provide feedback on the accuracy of data collection and keypunch. Information was provided to the college about extraneous characters (e.g., data other than the characters 1 and 2 for the variable SEX) or other obvious inaccuracies (e.g., a student recorded as working 85 hours a week).

3. Sample data were sent representing the complete interview on all sample students collected by the individual colleges. Before analysis, these data were subjected to further logic and outlier checks

Data Logic and Outlier Checks were performed, under contract, by Golden West College. This check was done by a program designed to identify erroneous characters (e.g., Sex = 3) or data illogic (e.g., an 18-year-old male characterized as a Displaced Homemaker). All incoming data were subjected to this check, and feedback sheets were provided both to the participating college and to the State Project Office.

These sheets identified by case number, those cases containing errors of this nature, and provided an explanation of the error so located (e.g., working 85 hours a weeks is beyond acceptable range). Data sets containing an acceptable number of errors of this nature (i.e., less than 5 percent of cases containing data errors) were analyzed. If more than this acceptable limit was received by the State Project Office, the participating college was requested to submit a corrected deck.

PROJECT STAFFS

Part of the Fall Project Manual suggested criteria for staff hiring. The criteria were that the interviewers be:

1. Highly intelligent,
2. Friendly and warm on the telephone,
3. Systematic in the performance of work,
4. Sufficiently mature to be able to make reasonable decisions quickly, and
5. Studying, or experienced, in a social science or allied field so that they feel that they are learning something useful while on the job.

STAFF TRAINING

Training suggestions were also sent to the participating colleges. The following suggestions were made in the Fall Project Manual:

1. Each staff member be provided with a copy of the Fall Project Manual and the appendices.
2. Each staff member be required to read it thoroughly to become acquainted with the full intent and scope of the study.
3. Training sessions be held on the decision rules used to clarify responses made during telephone interviews.

4. Project coordinators conduct dry-run exercises with mock clients to give their interviewers practice before they start regular interviews.

DATA CONTROL PROCEDURES

Recommendations were made to participating colleges with respect to numbering systems for students. Each respondent was assigned a three-digit number to be placed on the file and to be used in identifying the individual case in that college. That number, in combination with the ID number for the college, provided each respondent with a study-wide unique identification number (e.g., respondent 25 in college 11 would bear the number 11025) so that errors in the data base could be traced back from the punched card to the college and to that respondent's file in the college project file records.

PROJECT COMMUNICATION

At the beginning of the study, it was recognized that, however carefully instructions were written in the Interview Guides and other instructional documents, there were bound to be ambiguities and/or contingencies not foreseen when the documents were produced. Therefore, plans were made for a system of communication which would enable the State Project Office to (1) receive queries or corrections from the field, (2) make the necessary decisions or do the necessary rewrite of materials, and (3) disseminate additional instructions or changes to the colleges so that the principle of "common data collected in a standard manner" could be adhered to.

The communication device used was a newsletter which was produced as needed, usually twice monthly and occasionally weekly. These

newsletters were used to notify project coordinators at participating colleges (1) of additions or changes in instructions, (2) about administrative matters (e.g., billing forms), and (3) about upcoming project meetings and other matters of mutual interest. Additionally, the newsletters were used to keep members of the Consortium who were not project coordinators (e.g., members of the State Chancellor's staff) abreast of developments during the study.

PREPARATION FOR DATA ANALYSIS

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was chosen for the analysis of data. These programs are available at the Campus Computing Network of UCLA, at the Los Angeles Community College District, and at many other computer centers. The program for data analysis was written at the same time that the first 50 cases were submitted for test. These 50 cases and cumulative packages of data from L. A. Pierce College were used to perfect the program and to plan and execute the data modification operations (e.g., collapsing the variable AGE into five-year intervals necessary to make the frequency counts amenable to scanning).

DATA ANALYSIS

Generally, two statistical techniques were used in the data analysis--frequency distributions and cross-tabulations. Frequency distributions were used where the purpose was to describe a particular aspect of a sample or subgroup within a sample. Cross-tabulations were used to describe, or to test for, relationships between nominal variables (e.g., SEX by ETHNICITY).

FINDINGS

These findings are based on data collected in the fall of 1978, as complete spring data have not been received in the State Project Office at this writing. Spring data will be the basis of a supplementary report. The 50 variables constitute a rich data base. The number of potential analyses is indefinitely large. Those done for the present report will be limited to those required by the stated goals and objectives. There will be some suggestions for future work within that framework. It is expected that this data base will be made available to graduate students and other researchers for further analysis.

For ease of reading, names of variables in the study will be printed in capital letters, e.g., AGE, SEX, MARITAL STATUS. Where necessary for clarification, the questions asked of the respondents will be included in the text. Though most of the reporting will be based on aggregated data, there will be some discussion of data on a college-by-college basis. To ensure comparability of data across colleges, percentages, not frequency counts, will be used. Total percentages were prepared by weighting each college proportionally to Fall 1978 Average Daily Attendance (ADA). (Data on first-time enrollments were not available for all colleges.) For cross-tabulations, proportional weighting could not be used.

Findings are discussed under the headings of Representativeness of the Sample, Attrition Patterns, Demographics, Employment Information, Academic Information, Special Student Groups, and Other Findings. Objectives of the study are identified within each section of Findings.

There are differences in N sizes between the frequency counts and the cross-tabulations in this document, especially with respect to data gathered over the telephone. These differences arise from the fact that, for each dimension of a cross-tabulation, there is a separate set of missing data, and these two sets combine to produce missing data cells whose frequency is greater than those in each of the two dimensions.

It is recognized that aggregating data on day and evening students will produce some distortions (e.g., course and unit variables). Evening students tend to be older, more frequently have full-time jobs, and have different goals and attendance patterns (e.g., day students tend more to be involved in basics, evening students more involved in continuing education). An examination of the demographics and other aspects of day versus evening students will be provided in Part II of the Report on Academic Year 1978-1979.

The Sample included 8,151 students. Of these, 6,246, or 77 percent, could be reached by telephone. A total of 6,078 students were cooperative with the interviewers on the telephone (i.e., completed credible interviews). Those who could not be reached included 1,056 who never answered their telephones and 726 whose telephones were disconnected or who had given erroneous telphone numbers.

REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE SAMPLE

This section addresses the following objectives of the study:

3A. To compare demographic data of the samples drawn with those of the populations of participating colleges and the state as a whole.

4A. To determine the similarity of federal and state reports when the data are estimated from the total

student body and when they are extracted from the sample.

In each case, the populations to be represented are first-time students in Fall 1978.

To test how well these objectives were met, the Sample was compared to the populations on SEX ratio, ETHNICITY, and AGE. The comparisons were made for each college, and the 15 college totals were compared with the total student population of all colleges in the state. No statistical comparisons were made because the sample sizes are sufficently large to produce statistical significance on meaningless differences. All data on the college populations and the total state were supplied by the Chancellor's Office in Sacramento. The populations for first-time students, though available, would have taken excessive programming and time to identify. Consequently, the population percentages are those for all students enrolled in the project colleges of the state in the Fall 1978 semester or quarter.

Table 1 shows the SEX ratio for the 15-college sample was 44.5 percent to 55.5 percent men to women. The ratios of the individual colleges varied around this, and, in all but one case, the women significantly outnumbered the men. The SEX ratio for the total state is 46 percent to 54 percent. The comparison between the populations and the Sample SEX ratios are well within "sampling error" and any discrepancies can be accounted for by the fact that population proportions were computed on total student body and the Sample on only first-time students.

Table 2 gives the proportion of each ethnic group for the total state and for each of the 15 colleges, both Sample and population. The data supplied by the Chancellor's Office include a "Missing Data"

TABLE 1

POPULATION AND SAMPLE PERCENTAGE COMPARISONS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

	Antelope Valley	Bkrsfld	Cerritos	Contra Costa	El Camino	Foothill	Golden West	Imperial Valley	L. A. City	L. A. Pierce	Sac City	Evergreen	Santa Ana	Shasta	South-Western	Total
Population Data																
Male	46.3	47.3	47.0	43.7	47.0	44.2	44.9	43.6	47.5	47.0	[illegible]	47.0	52.4	40.8	50.2	46.3
Female	53.7	52.7	53.0	56.3	53.0	55.8	55.1	56.4	52.5	53.0	53.8	53.0	47.6	58.2	49.8	53.7
Sample Data																
Male	42.5	40.1	49.3	41.9	43.3	45.3	44.6	41.2	48.2	41.7	41.	47.5	42.5	43.7	48.7	44.5
Female	57.5	59.9	50.7	58.1	56.7	54.7	55.4	58.8	51.8	58.3	58.1	52.5	57.5	56.3	51.3	55.5

TABLE 2

POPULATION AND SAMPLE PERCENTAGE COMPARISONS ON ETHNICITY

	Antelope Valley	Bkrsfld	Cerritos	Contra Costa	El Camino *	Foothill *	Golden West	Imperial Valley	L. A. City	L. A. Pierce	Sac City	Evergreen	Santa Ana	Shasta	South-Western	Corrected Total
American Indian																
Population	3.0	1.8	1.3	1.1			1.6	0.8	1.0	1.5	1.1	0.6	1.2	2.5	0.8	1.4
Sample	1.6	1.2	1.6	1.2	0.0	0.2	0.8	0.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.5	1.4	0.5	0.8
Asian																
Population	1.9	2.6	5.4	6.7			4.7	1.2	13.4	3.2	12.8	5.6	2.3	0.0	9.0	5.8
Sample	2.7	0.2	1.6	5.7	5.8	8.9	4.2	1.5	17.4	4.8	11.7	11.9	4.9	1.0	11.4	6.2
Black																
Population	4.3	5.7	3.8	29.4			0.9	3.8	26.3	2.2	14.4	5.2	3.2	0.5	4.6	9.0
Sample	1.8	6.9	5.2	29.9	23.9	3.4	0.4	2.3	30.3	3.1	14.1	7.4	4.5	0.4	5.0	8.0
White																
Population	70.7	74.4	60.8	52.2			71.8	39.2	13.4	53.2	50.9	76.0	58.0	69.7	55.8	68.6
Sample	86.7	72.1	67.7	50.0	56.6	79.0	86.1	37.2	21.6	82.1	57.1	60.5	75.5	[illegible]	59.0	68.9
Hispanic																
Population	6.1	14.7	16.8	6.7			4.2	47.5	12.0	4.0	10.6	10.1	23.8	3.4	20.9	11.0
Sample	6.4	17.4	16.1	4.1	8.9	5.3	6.5	55.6	21.0	5.5	11.4	17.4	10.8	[illegible]	19.8	12.6
Other																
Population	1.3	0.8	3.3	0.0			2.7	7.0	5.4	0.7	2.7	0.0	2.7	0.2	7.9	2.7
Sample	0.5	2.1	7.4	7.8	4.5	2.2	0.8	3.1	1.0	1.1	1.8	1.7	7.4	23.3	2.3	2.5
Decline to State																
Population	12.7	0.0	8.6	3.9			14.1	0.5	32.9	35.2	7.5	2.5	4.1	0.6	1.0	(11.2)
Sample	0.2	0.0	0.3	1.2	0.3	1.0	1.1	0.4	3.0	2.4	3.0	0.7	1.2	1.6	2.1	0.9

* Not in State System

column that varies from 0.8 percent (Bakersfield) to 35.9 percent (L. A. Pierce); statewide 11.2 percent were missing. If the missing data are assigned to each group proportionally, as shown in the totals column, the resultant proportions are all within 1.3 percent of the study totals. Considering that the Sacramento data originated with written choices and resulted in a large proportion of missing data and that the study data were gathered from interviews resulting in 0.8 percent missing data, it is reasonable to suggest that discrepancies are negligible and that the sample data are indeed representative of the ethnicity of first-time community college students throughout the state.

Table 3 shows the Sample and population percentages for age with interval widths of five years. As expected, the Sample students are significantly younger than the population. The mean and median of the sample of first-time students are 26.0 and 22.0 respectively, while comparable statistics for the total population of community college students are 29.0 and 25.0. For both the total Sample and total population, the modal age is 18.0. Regardless of differences in central tendency, the shape of the two distributions is the same. Each has an extreme positive skew. The discrepancies in the means and medians, as well as the differences in the younger intervals of most colleges, can be partially accounted for by the fact that the Sample represents only first-time students. A supplementary explanation is that more younger than older students transfer or leave the colleges in successive semesters. This is an hypothesis to be tested in the second year of the project.

TABLE 3

Top figure refers to Population
Second figure refers to Sample

POPULATION AND SAMPLE PERCENTAGE COMPARISONS ON AGE

	Antelope Valley	Bkrsfld	Cerritos	Contra Costa	El Camino	Foothill	Golden West	Imperial Valley	L. A. City	L. A. Pierce	Sac City	Evergreen	Santa Ana	Shasta	South-Western	Total
15-19	25.6 29.3	24.9 49.7	25.0 53.9	21.4 31.9	27.8 58.7	18.4 69.3	25.4 33.9	30.1 51.0	16.7 32.0	30.4 49.8	22.7 36.6	25.0 35.4	18.4 37.9	25.5 38.2	24.0 46.9	22.9 43.3
20-24	21.1 24.3	26.0 20.4	29.8 17.3	22.9 14.6	30.8 24.2	24.6 14.5	28.1 21.5	29.1 18.8	33.1 24.1	29.7 17.3	29.8 27.2	25.6 21.5	28.7 21.5	21.1 14.6	28.0 17.5	26.6 19.6
25-29	13.7 12.1	16.2 9.8	15.3 7.4	15.7 13.5	15.8 12.6	16.1 4.4	14.7 13.6	14.4 8.8	20.3 20.3	11.5 8.3	19.5 16.4	16.3 14.9	17.2 12.2	15.5 11.4	14.6 12.1	16.1 11.7
30-34	11.9 9.7	10.0 8.0	10.4 5.8	12.1 8.8	9.1 7.2	10.3 3.0	9.8 10.5	8.8 8.0	11.8 10.6	7.6 6.3	9.9 7.5	14.4 9.9	10.6 7.6	11.9 10.7	8.8 9.4	10.7 8.1
35-39	6.9 5.4	6.3 4.0	6.7 6.2	8.4 6.5	5.4 4.4	7.4 2.0	6.5 5.6	4.9 3.4	6.4 5.6	5.9 6.3	5.0 5.0	7.9 7.4	6.7 5.5	7.9 4.7	5.9 4.7	6.6 5.2
40-44	6.3 5.1	4.2 1.1	4.2 2.8	5.5 6.2	3.9 3.6	4.9 1.4	5.3 5.2	4.2 3.4	3.8 2.5	4.4 2.8	3.8 2.8	5.0 3.4	5.0 5.3	5.9 6.0	6.8 3.1	5.0 3.6
45-49	5.1 3.4	3.2 1.1	3.3 2.5	4.2 3.1	2.8 2.3	4.7 2.1	4.0 3.1	3.4 3.8	2.6 1.3	3.9 3.3	3.1 2.1	2.5 3.4	3.8 3.5	4.3 4.7	5.9 3.0	4.0 2.7
50-54	3.2 2.6	2.9 1.6	2.6 1.9	3.8 3.5	2.0 0.9	4.2 0.6	2.7 2.7	1.8 1.9	1.9 1.6	3.2 2.3	1.6 0.6	1.6 1.5	3.0 3.3	3.4 2.2	3.4 1.1	3.0 1.8
55-59	1.9 1.4	2.2 1.6	1.4 1.2	3.1 2.3	1.3 0.8	3.3 1.6	1.7 1.5	1.4 0.4	1.4 1.4	1.9 2.5	1.2 1.1	0.7 1.3	2.3 1.3	1.9 1.9	1.6 0.9	2.1 1.5
60-64	1.0 0.9	1.2 1.1	0.7 0.5	1.6 0.8	0.5 0.5	1.9 1.2	0.9 0.5	0.6 0.0	0.8 0.4	1.0 0.2	0.5 0.2	0.4 0.2	1.1 1.1	1.2 0.1	0.5 0.5	1.3 0.7
65 & over	3.3 5.6	2.9 1.6	0.6 0.4	1.3 8.8	0.5 4.8	4.2 1.0	0.9 1.5	1.3 0.4	1.2 0.4	0.5 0.9	2.9 0.6	0.6 1.0	3.2 0.7	1.4 4.5	0.5 0.8	1.7 1.7
Sample Mean	29.2	24.6	24.3	31.2	26.6	22.2	27.3	24.2	25.7	25.4	24.8	26.4	26.8	29.0	24.9	26.0
Median	23.0	20.5	19.8	26.3	21.9	18.7	22.7	19.4	22.8	20.5	22.0	22.5		23.6	21.0	22.0
Mode	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0

ATTRITION PATTERNS

Three kinds of attrition are addressed by the study: (1) attrition of students who obtain admission, but have Zero Active Units by first census of their first semester/quarter at college (ZAUS students); (2) attrition associated with class drops and withdrawals between first census and the end of the semester/quarter; and (3) attrition of students who do not return to college after one or more semesters/quarters. This third category of attrition cannot be addressed until data for Fall 1979 have been collected. In general, this section addresses objective 1B, described below:

1B. To report detailed reasons given for specific student actions such as:

a. Being admitted to college but never enrolling in courses.

b. Enrolling in courses but never attending classes.

c. Attending classes, but withdrawing or being excluded before Census Week.

REASONS GIVEN

The most popular reasons for these actions are defined below. These definitions were developed in the Pierce College Longitudinal Study (Sheldon & Hunter, 1978) and adapted as necessary after formative evaluation of early Fall 1978 data in the current study.

Job Conflict involved schedule conflict between job and work in terms of hours. The distinction between this and Job Preference is that the student remains motivated to continue education, but, for financial reasons, must place a higher priority upon job schedule than upon class schedule.

Disliked Class Content covered those situations in which the student discovered that the class content was not what was expected when originally signing up (e.g., a student interested in practice who discovered that the class was highly theoretical).

Assignments Too Heavy covered those students who felt that the assignments took too much time. There may be some aspect of Job Conflict with respect to this reason because class assignments may be in conflict with job requirements, but interviewers were told to check this reason if the focus was on assignments rather than on other areas of conflict such as class schedule.

Indefinite Motivation was an inference drawn by the interviewer, and these findings must be viewed with caution as all interviewers may not have used the same standards. In general, interviewers were instructed to listen for vagueness of answers, speech patterns evidencing insecurity (e.g., ending a sentence with a tonal upswing as if the sentence were a question not a statement), and answers which did not quite appear to fit the question (e.g., "I missed my counseling appointment and decided to come back next semester"). In general, the pattern displayed by a respondent with Indefinite Motivation is that of immaturity and general indecision about goals.

Underprepared for Class covered those instances where the student found after beginning a class that he/she lacked the prerequisite knowledge for the class (e.g., arithmetic skills required for a beginning algebra class).

Job Preference over School covered those instances in which a student made the conscious decision that obtaining and keeping a job was more important than continuing an education. Unlike Job Conflict, this reason involved a rank ordering of priorities such that a job ranked higher than education.

Disliked Instructor covered personality conflict with the instructor. There was also a "Disliked Instruction" reason (seldom given) which covered the instructor's methods, but which did not involve any personal feeling with respect to the instructor.

Class Switching covered those instances in which the student was shopping around trying to fill a schedule, or took the same course at a different hour for reasons of personal convenience.

STUDENT SAMPLING

Initial samples drawn by the participating colleges were designed to allow for approximately 40 percent attrition by first Census Week. At that time, subjects were categorized as being either Sample Students those with active units at first census) or ZAUS students (those having zero active units at first census). Originally, it was intended to provide percentage figures based on ZAUS attrition, but this was not found to be practical. The participating colleges vary in their registration and class enrollment policies; some hold registration several weeks before classes begin; others hold registration and class enrollment within a week of the beginning of school. This time differential proved to be a crucial intervening variable because those

colleges in the first category had many more ZAUS students than those in the second category. Statistics on percentage of ZAUS attrition would be misleading and were excluded from Findings.

ZAUS students were given a short interview to determine their reasons for withdrawal. They were not interviewed further because the college could not be said to have any long-term effect upon them. Sample students were given the full interview, and are considered part of the study over its full term. The section immediately below is the only report which will be made on ZAUS students.

STUDENTS WITH ZERO ACTIVE UNITS AT CENSUS (ZAUS)

The 15 colleges reported data on 1,189 students identified as having Zero Active Units (ZAUS) at Census Week. Of these, 1,136 were reachable and produced credible interviews.

Of the reachable ZAUS students, 43 percent were male and 54 percent were female, about the same proportions as the Sample as a whole. The mean age was 29, the modal age 18, and the median age 23, also about the same as that of the Sample. Twenty percent of this group were day students, and 28 percent were evening students. These proportions are different from the CLASS HOURS porportions of the Sample, but 48 percent could not be characterized because they had never signed up for any classes. Other than variable CLASS HOURS, ZAUS is not significantly different from the Sample Students.

In rank order, the most popular reasons for not attending college were Job Conflict (15 percent), Indefinite Motivation (12 percent), Classes Closed or Cancelled (12 percent), Accepted Another College (11 percent), Job Preference over School (11 percent), Moved (7 percent),

and Illness (6 percent). This accunts for 74 percent of the ZAUS students.

The categories not represented in Sample Students' responses were Accepted Another College (probably indicating that admission to the community college had been an "insurance policy"), Moved (a move out of district or a move closer to another community college in the same district), and Illness (illness of either the student or a member of the family).

Of these reasons, six (Job Conflict, Classes Closed or Cancelled, Accepted Another College, Job Preference, Moved, and Illness) are occurrences over which the college has limited control. Only two, Indefinite Motivation and, possibly, Financial Problems, would appear to be situations amenable to counseling or other college action.

ZAUS reasons are similar to Sample reasons given below only in the rank given to Job Conflict (clearly a major problem for community college students), the relatively high rank of Indefinite Motivation, and the low rank given to Job Preference over School. Further comparison is impractical because of the number of Sample reasons relating to class experience (e.g., Disliked Class Content).

SAMPLE STUDENTS' REASONS FOR CLASS DROP

Overall, more than 26 reasons were possible, though only 8 reasons proved to be popular. Each of the remaining 8 reasons accounted for less than 5 percent of the responses, and the total of all 18 came to less than 26 prcent. The data reported on are confined to the 8 most popular reasons.

Respondents could give up to 3 reasons for dropping classes because such actions might be taken for a combination of reasons. The data reported below, therefore, are reported on the basis of the number of responses, not the number of respondents.

In rank order, the most popular reasons were Job Conflict (23 percent), Disliked Class Content (10 percent), Assignments Too Heavy (10 percent), Indefinite Motivation (10 percent), Underprepared for Class (7 percent), Job Preference over School (6 percent), Disliked Instructor (4 percent), and Class Switching (4 percent).

These data seem to indicate that most of the reasons given for class drops do not involve issues over which the college has a great deal of control or responsibility. Only with respect to Disliked Class Content, Indefinite Motivation, and Underprepared for Class does it appear that action by the college counseling office might be of assistance. The most often given response, Job Conflict, relates to events primarily outside the college; however, this reason is frequently tied to a need for money. Together with the finding that more than 24 percent of the financially disadvantaged were not aware that financial aid was available, perhaps some course drops could be avoided.

DEMOGRAPHICS

This section addresses objective 1A:

1A. To produce frequency distributions and cross-tabulations of descriptive and demographic student data and to compute appropriate descriptive statistics.

Included in this section are information about SEX, AGE, MARITAL STATUS, DEPENDENTS, and ETHNICITY.

SEX

Overall, 44 percent of the Sample were male, 56 percent female, a pattern consistent across all colleges. These results represent the total Sample including "Unreachables." The preponderance of females in the Sample appears surprising, but discussion with the project coordinators indicates that in recent years the number of females has exceeded that of males enrolled in community colleges.

AGE

The distribution of AGE has a pronounced positive skew. Though the mean age in the total Sample is 25.8 years, the modal age is 18.0 years, and the median age is 21.6 years. This pattern is consistent across all 15 colleges, with only slight variation in measures of central tendency across the Sample. (These findings are consistent with the findings in the Pierce College Longitudinal Study.) Fully 77 percent of the Sample was younger than 30 years of age, and 45 percent of the Sample was younger than 20 years of age, indicating that the bulk of the community college population is composed of young people.

Table 4 shows the cross-tabulation of AGE by SEX. In general, the pattern is consistent across ages. Within each age group, there are more females than males. There is a higher percentage of females between 30 and 60 with a pronounced difference (34 percent males, 66 percent females) in the 30-35 age range. The pattern is reversed in the 65+ age range.

TABLE 4

AGE by SEX

	Male %	Female %
15-19	45	55
20-24	47	53
25-29	45	55
30-34	41	59
35-39	34	66
40-44	38	62
45-49	41	59
50-54	42	58
55-59	40	60
60-64	44	56
65+	53	47
Overall	44	56
Total N	3,522	4,427

MARITAL STATUS

Sixty-four percent of the Sample reported that they had never married, not surprising given the age distribution. Twenty-nine percent were married, and only 6 percent were divorced, separated, or widowed.

Table 5 shows the distribution of SEX by MARITAL STATUS, the proportions of men and women in the various categories. The proportion of unmarried men and women seems about the same as the Sample as a whole, and the proportion of married women is approximately the same as that of the mid-thirties proportions discussed above. The proportion of women who are separated, divorced or widowed, however, is much higher than that of the Sample as a whole. Because this is the population from which DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS is drawn, it will be of special interest to study these groups in ensuing years.

TABLE 5

MARITAL STATUS by SEX

	Male %	Female %
Never Married	47	53
Married	39	60
Separated	24	76
Divorced	26	74
Widowed	7	93

In this connection, the proportions of each SEX by MARITAL STATUS shown in Table 6 below are of interest.

TABLE 6

SEX by MARITAL STATUS

	Percent Never Married	Percent Married	Percent Separated	Percent Divorced	Percent Widowed	N
Male	68	28	1	3	0.1	2,727
Female	57	32	2	6	1.0	3,626

These data show that a higher percentage of men than women were never married, but that a lower percentage of men than women were married, separated, or divorced. The difference between the sexes in the married category is not extreme, but the percentages of separated, divorced, and widowed women is considerably higher than the percentage of men in those categories.

Despite the differences in proportions of males and females in the separated, divorced, and widowed categories, these data raise an interesting question. Given the high divorce rate, it would be of value to learn why the proportion of women in these categories is so small, and why so few women appear to be making use of the community college system to provide them with job skills.

DEPENDENTS

Dependents are defined to include all persons supported by the respondent exclusive of self. Seventy-six percent of the Sample had no dependents (not surprising in view of the marital status figures listed above), 16 percent had two or fewer dependents, and only 8 percent had more than two. This pattern was consistent across all colleges in the Sample, though the colleges serving rural and lower socioeconomic areas tended to have students with larger numbers of dependents.

Table 7 below shows the proportion of male and female students in the Sample having dependents. The proportion of men and women having dependents is essentially the same as that for the Sample as a whole for those with zero, one, and two dependents. Above that number, the pattern is reversed up though six children. For seven and eight or more, the pattern once again changes.

TABLE 7

PROPORTION OF MALES/FEMALES
FOR EACH NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS

	0 %	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	6 %	7 %	8+ %
Males	40	46	45	60	66	56	83	47	47
Females	60	54	55	40	34	44	17	53	53

Table 8 shows the proportion of men and women with and without dependents. The proportion of men and women with zero, one, and two dependents is approximately the same (89 percent of males, 94 percent of females), but beyond that the proportion changes, with a smaller proportion of females in the Sample having dependents.

While these data are of interest, they are of small importance because the subjects with three or more dependents account for no more

than 8 percent of the Sample as a whole. If a study of the problems of this population is to be conducted, it should probably be done on those campuses where the proportion of large families is highest.

TABLE 8

PROPORTION OF EACH SEX WITH DIFFERENT NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS

	0 %	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	6 %	7 %	8+ %	N
Male	71	10	8	6	3	1	1	0.3	0.2	2,512
Female	79	8	7	3	1	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.1	3,384
N	4,476	508	421	250	111	32	23	15	7	

ETHNICITY

Table 9 shows the numbers and percentages of ethnic minorities identified in the study. The categories used are those required by the Vocational Education Data System (VEDS). The total shown is that of students who could be reached by telephone or other means and who were cooperative with the interviewers.

TABLE 9

ETHNICITY

Category	Frequencies	Relative Frequencies
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	50	0.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	375	6.2
Black not Hispanic	484	8.0
Hispanic	765	12.6
White not Hispanic	4,173	68.7
Other	154	2.5
Decline to State	57	0.9
Missing Data	19	0.3

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Information on OCCUPATIONAL STATUS, HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT, and WAGES was collected as baseline data for future comparison between vocational and nonvocational students after one, two, and three years. (Objective 2A will be discussed in a later section.)

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

Overall, 19 percent of the Sample reported that they were students and not usually employed, and 81 percent of the Sample reported that they were employed, either part-time, full-time, or as homemakers. Fifteen percent of the Sample reported that they held jobs requiring little or no skills. Given the AGE statistics, it seems reasonable to assume that the 19 percent unemployed were mostly in the 18-20 year-old range, and that 34 percent of the Sample are without job skills. Whereas the unemployed students contained approximately the same proportions of males and females as the Sample as a whole, the proportion of men and women in unskilled jobs was 50-50. Because most recent high school graduates possess few, if any, job skills, this indicates that a slightly higher percentage of younger male students than female students hold semi-skilled jobs.

Twenty-eight percent of the Sample reported holding semi-skilled jobs, 19 percent skilled jobs, and only 6 percent of the Sample said that they held professional or supervisory jobs.

Table 10 shows the proportions of males and females in various skill levels of employment. These figures confirm findings elsewhere that, above the semi-skill level, the proportion of men employed in higher-paying or higher-status jobs is greater than that of women.

This finding again underlines the importance of examining the needs of women in the college.

TABLE 10

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS by SEX

	Unemp %	Unskilled %	Semi-Skilled %	Skilled %	Prof/ Supr %	Home-maker %	Other %	D.S. %	N
Male	19	18	26	22	8	0.3	5	1	2,598
Female	19	14	29	15	5	13.1	4	1	3,493
N	1,131	969	1,698	1,111	389	466	258	54	6,091

Cross-tabulation of OCCUPATIONAL STATUS by ETHNICITY produced few differences in proportion across ethnic groups within OCCUPATIONAL STATUS categories. The American Indian/Alaskan Native had an unusually high proportion of skilled workers, balanced by an unusually low proportion of semi-skilled workers. A lower percentage of Whites was unemployed than any other group (perhaps accounted for by students from well-to-do families that were supporting them). Not unexpectedly, Blacks and Hispanics were lowest in the Professional and Supervisory category.

HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT

Twenty-six percent of the Sample was recorded as "Unemployed" or "Homemakers." The working hours of homemakers and volunteer workers were excluded from the calculations because this aspect of the study was restricted to gainful employment. Fully 35 percent of the Sample reported themselves as holding full-time jobs, and the mean hours of employment was 31 hours. Twenty-four percent of the Sample worked between 11 and 30 hours a week.

WAGES

The mean hourly wage of those students who held jobs was $4.27. The modal wage was $3.50 for all colleges except Imperial Valley and Southwestern, where the modal wage was $2.50. Both of these have a high percentage of Hispanics. Fully 40 percent of the Sample earned less than $5.00 per hour, and only 4 percent of the Sample reported themselves as earning more than $10.00 per hour (approximately $20,000.00 per year).

Table 11 shows the percentage distribution of SEX by WAGES. As with the preceding table, it shows that a higher percentage of women employed are found in the lower-paying jobs, and a higher percentage of the men employed are found in the higher-paying jobs. The mean wage for males in the Sample was $5.85, for women $4.52; the median for men was $4.10, for women $3.50. The mode figures were within $.10 of each other, but this figure is of little interest because the distribution of wages tended to be erratic and multi-modal rather than curvilinear. Cross-tabulation of both OCCUPATIONAL STATUS and WAGES with AGE produced the predictable information that younger students tend to have lower skill-level jobs and tend to earn lower amounts of money than older students.

TABLE 11

HOURLY WAGES

	$1-1.99 %	$2-2.99 %	$3-3.99 %	$4-4.99 %	$5-5.99 %	$6-6.99 %	$7-7.99 %	$8-8.99 %	$9-9.99 %	$10+ %	N
Male	0.4	15	28	15	9	7	7	5	3	10	1,647
Female	0.5	26	33	16	10	5	4	2	1	3	1,934

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

As a means of supplementing the demographic and employment information cited earlier, information on academic history and current status was collected. Academic history variables included LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED, HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED, and YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL. Information on high school grade point average and high school major were not collected. Asking about high school grade point average (as compared with getting it directly from records) would not have provided reliable data, and most of the participating colleges do not collect these data. High school major was not considered relevant to the present study.

LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED

Overall, 61 percent of the entire Sample had last attended high school, 18 percent a community college, and 13 percent a four-year college, though they had not necessarily graduated. Only 0.3 percent of the Sample had last attended a Regional Occupational Center (ROC) or Regional Occupational Program (ROP).

Across all colleges, the percentage of students who last attended high school was highest (38 percent to 92 percent). There was a great deal of variation in the percentage last attending a community college, ranging from 36 percent at Golden West to 1 percent at Bakersfield. An inspection of the data does not reveal any consistent recognizable pattern. Size of college, the rural-suburban-urban breakdown, and location are not related to this variable. With respect to four-year college attendance, only Bakersfield, Foothill, and Cerritos report unusually low figures (1 percent to 2 percent); the balance appeared

to be roughly equal. No single variable affected these three campuses, as they appear to serve very different populations.

Most of the members of the Sample attended public shcools; only 10 percent attended a private (proprietary or church) school.

Table 12 shows no difference in the proportions of men and women who last attended the types of schools shown.

TABLE 12

LAST SCHOOL by SEX

	H.S. Grad. %	Adult Night %	Comm. Coll. %	4-Yr. Coll. %	ROP-ROC. %	Other %	N
Male	63	2	17	14	(1)	4	2,656
Female	62	3	18	13	(1)	4	3,550

Table 13 shows the proportions of the different ethnic groups with respect to LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED. The highest proportion, Hispanics, 66 percent, last attended high school. The lowest proportion of this group reported that they had attended either community or four-year colleges. Equal percentages of Asian/Pacific Islanders and Blacks reported last attending high school. The lowest percentage reporting attendance at a four-year college were the Blacks and the Hispanics. The group with the highest proportion having attended a four-year college was the Asian group.

TABLE 13

LAST SCHOOL by ETHNICITY

	Am. Ind/ Alaskan %	Asian/ Pac. Is. %	Black not Hisp. %	Hisp. %	White not Hisp. %
H.S. Grad.	44	53	52	66	60
Adult/Night	9	2	2	4	2
Comm. Coll.	18	15	18	11	18
4-Year Coll.	11	18	7	6	14
ROP-ROC	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
Other	10	2	5	5	3
No Data	9	10	17	8	3
N	57	417	586	844	4,400

Two interesting anomolies are present in these data. First, the American Indian/Alaskan Native group reported the highest percentage of attendance at a school other than the categories provided, and at the same time reported the lowest last attendance at high school. Second, the Black members of the Sample have the highest proportion of "No Data," i.e., they declined to give information.

HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED

Consistent with the findings above, almost 60 percent of the students in the Sample reported graduating from high school for highest grade completed. About 8 percent held less than a high school diploma, 22 percent had some college or trade school experience, and approximately 7 percent held a bachelor's degree or higher.

With respect to highest grade completed, Table 14 shows that the males and females in the study were evenly matched. There is little difference in the proportion of men and women achieving various levels of education. The percentage difference between the proportions for

AA, BA, and Higher Degree is considerable, but the numbers of students involved are so small that no conclusions can be drawn.

TABLE 14

HIGHEST GRADE by SEX

	Non H.S. Grad. %	H.S. Grad. %	Some Coll. %	AA/ Cert. %	BA/ BS %	Higher Degree %	D.S. %	N
Male	8	60	21	3	5	2	1	2,655
Female	8	58	22	4	6	1	1	3,558

Table 15 shows the distribution of HIGHEST GRADE by AGE in five-year intervals. In considering these data, it is important to remember that the age distribution of students has an extreme positive skew. Slightly less than 35 percent of the Sample are 25 years of age or older, and the higher the age, the lower the proportion of the Sample in a given category. Some of the proportions discussed below represent small numbers of respondents.

TABLE 15

HIGHEST GRADE by AGE

	15-29 %	20-24 %	25-29 %	30-34 %	35-39 %	40-44 %	45-49 %	50-54 %	55-59 %	60-64 %	65+ %
Non H.S.	8	9	8	6	5	8	7	8	4	16	17
H.S.	84	46	32	34	37	31	35	33	31	37	28
Some Coll.	7	35	37	33	32	37	33	34	35	18	25
A.A. Cert.	-0-	5	7	8	6	7	10	9	8	6	8
B.A./B.S.	-0-	4	14	13	14	14	9	9	13	12	12
Higher	-0-	-0-	2	5	5	3	4	4	6	6	5
D.S.	-0-	1	1	1	1	-0-	-0-	3	2	4	5
N	2,860	1,099	689	486	340	234	182	124	97	49	60

The figures for the 25 and over age groups are of particular interest because of the consistent pattern to be seen in the table. In most age groups, both those with a high school diploma only and

with some college experience represent approximately one third of the age group. Non-high-school graduates do not enter community colleges in appreciable numbers, nor do holders of A.A. degrees re-enter. Holders of B.A. or B.S. degrees represent about one seventh of most age groups, and holders of higher degrees represent very small percentages of each age group.

The bulk of those 25 years and older hold high school diplomas, and roughly half of these have had some college experience.

Table 16 shows the educational achievement levels of the ethnic groups. The highest percentage of high school graduates is the Whites, though they fall short of the Asian group in terms of B.A. or B.S. degrees. The Hispanic group is lowest in Some College.

TABLE 16

HIGHEST GRADE by ETHNICITY

	Am. Ind./ Alaskan %	Asian Pac. %	Black %	Hisp. %	White %	D.S. %
Non H.S.	10	9	8	15	7	6
H.S.	59	55	62	63	68	43
Some Coll.	17	20	23	16	23	21
A.A. Cert.	8	5	3	7	4	7
B.A./B.S.	4	9	3	2	6	8
Higher	2	2	-0-	-0-	2	1
D.S.	-0-	1	1	1	-0-	14
N	52	376	493	783	4,251	72

YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL

Forty-six percent of the Sample reported no break between their last school and admission to community college. It is probable that virtually all of these were recent high school graduates. Twelve percent of the Sample reported a one-year break between their most

recent school and entrance to community college. The next highest percentage, 15 percent, indicated that it had been 12 years or more since they last attended school. Seven percent of the Sample reported a two-year break, 5 percent a three-year break, and 15 percent indicated that they had been out of school for between 4 and 11 years.

Aggregating, there are three distinct blocks of students: those who entered community college within two years of their last school experience (approximately 64 percent), those who returned after a break of 12 years or more (22 percent), and those who lie in between (15 percent).

Cross-tabulation of YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL by SEX did not result in any appreciable differences. The proportion of males in the Sample who had come straight from school and those who had come after one year out was slightly higher than the proportion of females (50 percent to 44 percent, 14 percent to 11 percent), but not significantly so. Cross-tabulation of YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL by AGE produced no unexpected patterns. They are highly correlated as each is directly related to time. Given the median and mode for AGE cited earlier, it was not possible for there to be a pattern other than that of having the largest percentage of students in YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL data points shift gradually up the age range (i.e., 45 percent of 15-19 year-old students being one year out, 46 percent of 20-24 year-old students three years out, 54 percent of 25-29 year old students seven years out, and so on).

YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL by CLASS HOURS (i.e., day, evening, both) was cross-tabulated, and showed another expected pattern. Students who had just emerged from school and were one year out tended to be

day rather than evening students. Those who had left school two or more years before tended to be evening students. The presumption is that the longer a student is out of school (and older), the more likely that the student is employed. These findings corroborate what any community college instructor would be likely to report; most students in day classes tend to be younger, and the greatest proportion of students in evening classes tend to be older.

Cross-tabulation of YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL by ETHNICITY shows that the highest percentage, Asians, come to community college with no delay (51 percent), the next highest group with zero years out of school was the Hispanic group (49 percent), with Whites and Blacks at 44 percent. The highest percentage of Blacks (18 percent) returned after one year out, and the lowest percentage of Asians (12 percent). Combining zero and one year out, the ethnic groups are about equal; 65 percent of the Asians, 62 percent of the Blacks, 61 percent of the Hispanics, and 58 percent of the Whites. The high percentage of the Asian group which enters community college is not surprising, given the achievement figures cited earlier. The surprising finding is the extent to which Blacks delay a year before returning to school. It would be useful to learn both the cause of the delay and the reason to return to school. Given the fact that Blacks in the Sample have the smallest proportion of A.A. degree or certificate holders at entrance, it will also be of interest to compare the extent to which this group is able to improve employment skill status and earning power (or otherwise meet their goals) and/or obtain degrees or certificates.

CURRENT ACADEMIC STATUS AND PLANS

This section contains information of CLASS HOURS (day vs. evening attendance), EXPECTED LENGTH OF STAY, COUNSELING NEEDS as perceived by the respondents, COLLEGE OBJECTIVES, JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING, INTERVIEW MAJOR and RECORDED MAJOR, both as stated by the respondent in interview and as recorded by the respondent in college records, and COURSE AND UNIT ENROLLMENT.

Class Hours

Overall, 49 percent of all students in the Sample on whom data were available were day students (i.e., signed up for classes all of which had starting times earlier than 4:30 p.m.), 37 percent were in evening classes only, and 14 percent had signed up for both day and evening classes. Because community colleges do not tend to have mid-afternoon classes, this last group is operating on a "split shift." Given the median and mode age data reported earlier, these findings are no surprise. Cross-tabulation of CLASS HOURS by SEX showed that the proportion of males and females attending day, evening and both classes was about the same. Cross-tabulation of CLASS HOURS by AGE showed that older students attend more evening classes. Cross-tabulation of CLASS HOURS by ETHNICITY shows that the highest proportion of Blacks (67 percent) attend days, and the lowest proportion of Whites (48 percent) attend days; 52 percent of Hispanics attend days, and 63 percent of Asians. Especially with respect to younger students, it would be interesting to learn what proportion of their support comes from family help, jobs, and financial aid, and if these proportions differ across ethnic groups.

Expected Length of Stay

The surprising finding with respect to this variable is the proportion of students who indicated that they would attend "Occasionally" (i.e., on a drop-in/drop-out basis). A plurality of students, 40 percent indicated this was their intention.

Eighty percent of the Sample indicated they would stay one semester, 10 percent one year, and 27 percent of the Sample said that they expected to stay two years. These figures deserve further investigation. It is possible that the projected examination of day versus evening students will clarify these findings. It is surprising, for example, that there is not a higher percentage of recent high school graduates who plan to attend for one or two years. Only 37 percent, however, so stated, which does not account for the approximately 60 percent of the Sample who are are recent high school graduates. The high number of students, 40 percent, who plan to attend on a drop-in/drop-out basis is also surprising. It is important to learn something about the characteristics of the goals of this group.

Cross-tabulation of AGE by EXPECTED LENGTH OF STAY showed that, among the 15-19 year-olds, two years was the most popular choice (42 percent), and "Occasionally" the next most popular (23 percent); among the 20-24 year-olds, "Occasionally" was the most popular choice (46 percent), and two years the next most popular (20 percent). Among all other age groups, "Occasionally" was the most popular choice, ranging from a low of 55 percent (25-29 year-olds) to a high of 76 percent (60-64 year-olds). This finding indicates the advisability of examining the uses made of community colleges by their students; it is evidently inaccurate to state that community colleges provide

two-year vocational training and college transfer for many students. Among all ethnic groups, "occasional" attendance also has a clear plurality; two years is second place with a range from 22 percent to 32 percent.

In an effort to establish the relationship between college goals and EXPECTED LENGTH OF STAY, this variable was cross-tabulated with the five most popular categories for JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING. The categories for this variable were translated into college majors. The five most popular were Business and Management (which includes Secretarial Science), Engineering and Related Fields, Health Services (which includes Nursing), General Transfer, and Self Enrichment. Table 17 shows this relationship.

TABLE 17

EXPECTED LENGTH OF STAY by
JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING

	Business %	Engineering %	Health %	General Transfer %	Self-Enrichment %
1 semester	7	8	9	13	9
1 year	11	10	9	15	6
3 semesters	6	5	6	6	2
2 years	29	26	32	43	8
2 + years	8	11	15	7	3
Occasionally	39	40	29	16	73

The proportions of the years above 2 years have been combined because the percentages were too small to be of interest individually. The popularity of occasional attendance across all but General Transfer deserves further investigation. Whereas it is not surprising to find this popularity in the Self-Enrichment category (a catch-all term for those students pursuing personal interests not related to a major), it is surprising to find it a plurality over the "normal" two-year course

in all areas save Health. These figures are measures of intent, not actual attendance, and will be validated by a study cross-tabulating these majors with actual attendance by students over a number of years.

Counseling Needs

Of those interviewed, 43 percent stated they had no need for counseling. Of those who indicated this need, 13 percent wanted Transfer Counseling, 26 percent wanted Career Counseling, 12 percent Academic Advice, and the balance, 49 percent, wanted more than one kind of counseling (e.g., both Transfer and Career Counseling).

COUNSELING NEEDS were cross-tabulated with SEX, with the results shown in Table 18 below.

TABLE 18

COUNSELING NEEDS by SEX

	Transfer %	Career %	Personal %	Tutorial %	Financial %	Veterans %	Academic %
Male	25	40	5	4	3	2	20
Female	19	46	5	4	5	0.4	20

To some extent, these data are reflective of the fact that a smaller proportion of women than men (11 percent to 19 percent) have General Transfer as their goal (see below JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING). A higher percentage of men than women wanted Transfer Counseling, and a higher percentage of women wanted Career Counseling. Except for Veterans Counseling, they appear to be evenly matched. During the second or third year of the study, it will be determined the extent to which DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS seek various kinds of counseling.

Cross-tabulation of COUNSELING NEEDS by AGE showed that Career Counseling was selected by a plurality of all age groups save for

those who were more than 60 years of age. Among the 15-19 age group, Transfer Counseling was the next chosen, followed by Academic Advice. Transfer Counseling was also selected most by all age groups to 40 years olds (13 percent to 15 percent). This last statistic is of interest because it may indicate a mid-life career change on the part of members of the Sample. Academic Advice was selected by 20 percent or more of those between the ages of 15 and 34, those between 40 and 44, and 50 and 60 years of age.

Cross-tabulation of COUNSELING NEEDS with ETHNICITY showed that Transfer Counseling was the choice of 29 percent of Asians, 12 percent of Blacks, 19 percent of Hispanics, and 23 percent of Whites. These findings appear to parallel the achievement findings cited earlier (HIGHEST GRADE). Career Counseling was chosen by 42 percent of American Indian/Alaskan Natives, 9 percent of Asians, 11 percent of Blacks, 17 percent of Hispanics and 24 percent of Whites.

College Objectives

"What's your main reason for coming to college?" This question was designed to define in a general sense the student's purpose in coming to college. The categories provided were Pre-employment Training, Preparation for Transfer, Inservice Training, Retraining (i.e., training for a new career), Self-Enrichment, Undecided, and Decline to State. As with COUNSELING NEEDS, respondents were permitted to indicate a mixture of goals. Only about 15 percent indicated that they had multiple goals. Thirty-two percent of the Sample said that their goal was Pre-employment Training, 10 percent Inservice Training, 33 percent indicated Preparation

for Transfer, 8 percent said Undecided, and 21 percent gave Self-Enrichment as an objective. Only 3 percent claimed Retraining as their goal. The Undecided and Self-Enrich- nt categories, however, may be misleading because of differences i college practice. Some colleges allow an entering student to indicate indecision with respect to major; others provide major categories such as Self-Enrichment or Self-Interest, but do not provide "Undecided" categories. The effect of this difference in college practice is that interviewers across colleges had difficulty in collecting data in a standard fashion. The 21 percent of students who stated Self-Enrichment as a goal may contain a number of students who are actually undecided as to their college goal.

Job for Which in Training

"What kind of job are you training for?" In an effort to equate college goals with college majors on a job basis, the above question was asked of respondents, and telephone interviewers translated the response into the Classification of Instructional Disciplines (CID) code taken from the 1973 version published by the California State Chancellor's Office. The highest percentage, 22 percent, gave Business and Management (which includes Secretarial Science); the next highest, 20 percent, listed Self-Enrichment; 10 percent listed Preparation for Transfer (an academic rather than a vocational track); 10 percent listed Engineering and Related Fields, and 8 percent listed Health Services. The balance, each less than 5 percent to a major, were distributed across 23 CID major codes. The percentages listed above accounted for 60 percent of the responses made. Undecided and Missing Data (e.g., Decline to State) accounted for another 20 percent of the responses.

Cross-tabulation done with this variable was restricted to the five most popular choices listed above. Table 19 shows the results of cross-tabulation JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING by SEX.

TABLE 19

JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING by SEX

	Business %	Engineering %	Health %	General Transfer %	Self-Enrichment %
Male	24	27	4	19	26
Female	37	4	18	11	29

The percentages listed refer to the percentage with respect to those who made these choices, not to the total number of respondents. With the exception of Self-Enrichment, the choices appear to have been made along sex-stereotypic lines. It's likely that the discrepancy between the sexes in Business and Management is accounted for by the number of females in secretarial training and the preponderance of women in Health by those in nursing training. The low percentage of women in Engineering and Related Fields appears sex-stereotypic as well. The fact that almost twice the percentage of males as females are involved in Transfer deserves investigation, for this would appear to be one of the routes to higher-level jobs.

Cross-tabulating JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING with AGE showed a pattern of high interest in Business and Management, Engineering, Health and General Transfer among the younger students followed by a general decline in interest among the older students. Interest in Self-Enrichment showed an opposite pattern; only 13 percent of the youngest group chose Self-Enrichment; the range for the 25- to 65-year-old groups was between 27 percent (25-29 year-olds) and 88 percent

(60-64 year-olds). This pattern is interesting, but not surprising. Younger students are interested in specific training, and older students, though they maintain some interest in specific training, tend more to focus upon self interest studies.

The results of cross-tabulating JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING with ETHNICITY are in Table 20. The cells of interest are the low number of American Indians in Business (16 percent), the high number of Blacks in Business (40 percent), the low proportion of Asians who chose Health (8 percent), and the low proportion of Hispanics who chose General for Transfer (9 percent).

TABLE 20

JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING by ETHNICITY

	Am. Ind. %	Asian %	Black %	Hisp. %	White %
Business	16	28	40	34	31
Engineering	22	16	13	12	13
Health	19	8	18	14	11
Transfer	22	21	18	9	14
Self-Enrich.	22	27	11	31	30

Interview Major

For comparison purposes, the majors intended by the respondents were determined in two ways, by telephone interview and by inspection of college records. Evidence from the Pierce College Longitudinal Study indicated that college records become inaccurate because, unless they are updated each semester when students register, they tend to reflect the information given when a student first enrolls but not subsequent registrations. As this study progresses, this hypothesis will be tested by comparing INTERVIEW MAJOR with RECORDED MAJOR as found in college computer banks.

As with JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING excluding those who were Undecided, the most popular INTERVIEW MAJORS were Business and Managements (24 percent), Engineering and Related Studies (10 percent), Health Services (8 percent), and Self-Enrichment (17 percent).

Cross-tabulating INTERVIEW MAJOR with AGE showed the same basic pattern as with JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING, that is, larger percentages of interest in Business, Engineering, Health, and General Transfer among the young, declining with increase in age, and concomitant increase in Self-Enrichment among older respondents. Cross-tabulating INTERVIEW MAJOR with SEX produced approximately the same results as with JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING.

Table 21 below shows the results of cross-tabulating INTERVIEW MAJOR with ETHNICITY.

TABLE 21

INTERVIEW MAJOR by ETHNICITY

	Am.Ind. %	Asian %	Black %	Hisp. %	White %
Business	28	39	51	38	36
Engineering	24	23	17	13	15
Health	17	9	22	13	11
Transfer	7	9	2	8	9
Self-Enrich.	24	20	8	27	29

All groups showed less interest in General Transfer and more in Business and Engineering with respect to INTERVIEW MAJOR than to JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING. It is difficult to draw inferences about these differences. It is possible that respondents tended to address eventual goals in responding to the earlier item, and more immediate goals when asked specifically about their college major. It is also possible that nomenclature across colleges differs to the extent that "General

Transfer" was not available as a response in some colleges. In asking about jobs, the interchange would have been less structured as it involved general goals rather than specific major; the interchange in asking about college major was probably structured more closely to the nomenclature of the individual college. If General Transfer was not one of the acceptable choices, then respondents would have been unlikely to use it.

Recorded Major

As with INTERVIEW MAJOR, the most popular choices were Business and Management (19 percent), Engineering and Related Fields (9 percent), Health Services (7 percent), and Self-Enrichment (19 percent).

Cross-tabulation of RECORDED MAJOR by SEX revealed essentually the same pattern as with JOB FOR WHICH IN TRAINING and INTERVIEW MAJOR. A greater proportion of women than men chose Business (36 percent to 28 percent), a greater percentage of men than women chose Engineering (30 percent to 6 percent), a higher proportion of women chose Health (86 percent to 13 percent), and a smaller proportion of women than men chose General Transfer (5 percent to 7 percent). The sexes were approximately equal on Self-Enrichment, with women having a slight edge (34 percent to 30 percent).

Table 22 shows the results of cross-tabulating RECORDED MAJOR by ETHNICITY.

TABLE 22

RECORDED MAJOR by ETHNICITY

	Am. Ind. %	Asian %	Black %	Hisp. %	White %
Business	33	32	51	34	31
Engineering	24	24	22	11	15
Health	14	12	15	16	12
Transfer	0	5	3	4	7
Self-Enrich.	29	28	9	35	35

These data are somewhat different than INTERVIEW MAJOR. It is possible that these arose from differences in coding, or from the fact that RECORDED MAJOR and INTERVIEW MAJOR were collected as different times, possibly two or three months apart.

Course and Unit Enrollment

The number of courses and units signed up for by the respondents were taken from college records at Census Week. As of this writing, these data must be regarded as subject to error because (1) there appears to have been a delay between the signing of classes cards by instructors and their insertion into computerized records, and (2) there is a similar delay between the signing of withdrawal slips and their insertion into computer records. Accurate records on the total number of courses and units signed up for did not become available until the end of the fall semester or quarter; these data are presently being collected. Updated, accurate information will be included in a supplementary report to be filed using the Spring 1979 data.

The modal number of courses signed up for was one (27 percent); the next highest was two (17 percent), followed by three, four and

five, signed up for by between 12 percent and 13 percent, with little difference between them.

The modal number of units signed up for was three (24 percent), the next highest was twelve (20 percent). This second figure is not surprising since twelve is the minimum number of units to be considered a full-time student and required for some kinds of financial aid. Students taking six to eleven units accounted for 27 percent of the Sample, and students taking between fixteen and seventeen units accounted for 13 percent of the Sample.

These data do not represent units or courses actually attempted (i.e., courses that the student was attending at census). They only include total courses and units signed up for and recorded. An accurate determination will be available when the Spring Data are analyzed, as well as information on comparisons between courses and units signed up for, attempted, and passed. These analyses will also provide information on the number of Withdrawals or Incompletes, though this last information will be confounded because of different grading practices, (e.g., some colleges routinely provide "W" grades rather than "F" grades).

Cross-tabulating UNITS SIGNED UP FOR and COURSES SIGNED UP FOR by AGE shows that the heavier loads are carried by the younger students. For example, only 1 percent of the 15-19 year-olds took only one course as compared with 21 percent of the 45-49 year-olds; but 30 percent of the 15-19 year-olds took 12-14 units, compared with 4 percent of the 45-49 year-olds. The pattern is the same for courses attempted.

Cross-tabulating UNITS SIGNED UP FOR and COURSES SIGNED UP FOR by SEX shows that women tend to take lighter loads than men. For example,

7 percent of men took one unit, compared with 10 percent of women; 21 percent of men took 3-5 units, compared with 27 percent of women; six to eight units is the break-even point, and above that, though the differences are small, men tended to carry heavier loads. Cross-tabulation of UNITS SIGNED UP FOR and COURSES SIGNED UP FOR with ETHNICITY produced variation between the ethnic groups, but no recognizable pattern.

SPECIAL STUDENT GROUPS

Seven student groups were identified for study of potentional problems. These were:

1. Ethnic Minority Students
2. Physically Handicapped Students
3. Educationally Disadvantaged Students
4. Financially Disadvantaged Students
5. Limited-English-Speaking/Non-English-Speaking (LES/NES) Students
6. Displaced Homemaker Students
7. Those students in majors nontraditional for their sex

The report on these groups addresses objectives 1C and 5A, quoted below:

1C. To determine existing sex, race, or age bias in occupational programs.

5A. To provide detailed information emanating from the students themselves of the factors within the local education agencies that are perceived by LES/NES students to be discriminatory.

The problems experienced by the members of these groups will be discussed under headings for the individual groups below. In some instances (e.g., ethnic minority students), it can be noted that the numbers of identified ethnic minority students in the frequency counts previously reported is greater than that in the cross-tabulation identifying those with problems. This anomaly arises from the fact

that ethnic minority status, for example, is collected on some campuses, and was therefore available to interviewers if the student refused to respond to questions about ethnic status. Interviewers could not discuss ethnic minority problems with these students, of course. The problem cross-tablulations, therefore, contain smaller numbers than the earlier frequency distributions.

ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

Students in the Sample who belonged to ethnic minorities were asked "Does your ethnic status cause you problems?" Table 23 below shows the results.

TABLE 23

ETHNIC MINORITY PROBLEM

Category	Number of Members	Number with Problems	Percent
Amer. Ind.	42	1	2
Asian	325	16	5
Black	409	22	5
Hispanic	709	27	4

The following problems were reported:

1. Some teachers and students discriminate. Faculty and counselors were reported as being apathetic about the problems of ethnic minorities. Some minority students saw their fellow students as rejecting them because of their minority status.

2. Some ethnic minority students complained of cultural displacement, difficulties fitting into the "American Way," and problems in dealing with classes (e.g., English classes) which addressed the white middle class culture rather than the culture from which they came.

3. Some students complained of faculty "dislike" of minority students and expressed the belief that they had to work harder because of their minority status.

PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

Physical handicap was determined through self-identification. Respondents were asked if they had a physical handicap; if they considered themselves handicapped, they were assigned to this category. The question was, "One of the purposes of this study is to find out if people with handicaps have any special problems on this campus. Is there anything that handicaps you in your work at (name of college)?" Of the 172 persons so identified, 97 stated that the handicap gave them difficulty in their studies. Table 24 below shows the different types of handicaps, according to VEDS categories.

TABLE 24

TYPES OF HANDICAP

Type	Number	Percent
Hard of Hearing	17	10
Deaf	9	5
Speech Impediment	11	6
Visual	14	8
Orthopedic	57	33
Other Health	53	31
Deaf and Blind	0	0
Multiple	6	4
Decline to State	3	2

Handicapped students reported the following kinds of problems:

1. Necessity for bed rest causing make-up problems.
2. Distance between parking lot and classes.
3. Problems with stairs. Need for ramps or elevators.
4. Physical fatique arising from effort required to overcome disadvantage of handicap.
5. Course difficulties relating directly to handicap (e.g., student in typing class who has fine motor problems).
6. Difficulty in reading the blackboard.
7. Feels shut out because cannot do sports.

EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

In answer to the question "Do you think you will need special help with things like math and reading?", 920 or 15 percent of the Sample answered that they did. It will be of interesting in future semesters to find out whether this percentage changes, and to what extent.

Educationally disadvantaged students had few comments, probably because they were not yet familiar with the full extent of their difficulties. The only two difficulties mentioned were criticisms of study centers and open learning labs, though these may be college-unique problems.

FINANCIALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

"Do you think that money will be a problem for you at (Name of college)?" Interviewers were warned to question the respondent closely to determine whether the money problem involved basic needs or merely amusement (e.g., enough money to go skiing at Christmas). A total of 962 students, or 16 percent, said money would be a problem, and of these 557, or 58 percent, were not receiving aid. Seventeen percent of the financial problem group were receiving grants, 2 percent Work Study, 3 percent EOPS assistance, 6 percent non-college aid, 1 percent student loans, 1 percent need scholarships, 4 percent veterans benefits, and the balance were receiving two or more kinds of aid. Of those with financial problems, 24 percent were not aware of the existence of a financial aids office.

LES/NES STUDENTS

LES/NES students were identified on the telephone. Interviewers were instructed to listen for an accent indicating that the respondent's native language was not English, and to rank the respondent's ability on a three-point scale (No English, Limited English, Fluent English). Respondents in the first category required the use of an interpreter or a native in that language; respondents in the third category, though they might have an accent nonetheless spoke standard grammatical English.

Out of the 6,051 students, 839 were identified as having a foreign accent. Of these, 22 spoke no English, 275 spoke limited English, and 639 spoke fluent English. From these data, it would appear that one of the factors inhibiting enrollment is command of the English language. Because so few non-English speaking are in the Sample, it seems doubtful, however, that this accounts for all of the variance. People who speak no English tend to cluster in neighborhoods with others who speak their language, and may not be exposed to the publicity put out by community colleges. Many may not be aware of the existence of the nearest community college.

In general, the problems tended to be of two kinds, academic and social. These were:

1. Reading problems arising from lack of vocabulary and unfamiliarity with the language.
2. Classroom problems arising from lack of vocabulary, difficulties in following the instructor, and difficulty in asking questions or otherwise making vocal or written responses in class.
3. Difficulty in making friends arising from troubles in expressing themselves.

With respect to the Sample as a whole, students whose native language was other than English constituted 13 percent of the Sample.

A surprising number of these were students who spoke an Asian or Pacific Island language. Of the 465 students who gave their native language as either Hispanic or Asian, 40 percent were in the latter category. This would appear to have strong implications for those who direct LES/NES problems. Many officials assume that most students with LES/NES problems are of Hispanic origin.

LES/NES students were asked if their family backgrounds were unilingual or bilingual. Table 25 shows that those from bilingual families have fewer problems. Percentages shown are exclusive of missing data percentages.

TABLE 25

LES/NES by NATIVE LANGUAGE

	Spanish %	Bi-Sp/Eng. %	Asian %	Bi-Asian/Eng. %
No Problems	44	74	36	43
Slight Problem	22	8	26	29
Moderate Problem	19	5	22	12
Great Problem	7	0.5	13	4
Excessive	4	0.0	1	1

Comparing students with problems from bilingual Spanish/English and bilingual Asian/English backgrounds indicates that there are more problems with the Asian group than with the Hispanic group. Those who come from a unilingual family background appear to be approximately the same in terms of the classroom problems which they encounter, but those who come from a bilingual family appear very different. A much higher percentage of the bilingual Hispanics report themselves as problem-free. A lower percentage of them report slight and moderate problems than the bilingual Asian group. The small number of "Excessive"

problems may be because those with very little English skills do not attend college in the first place.

Cross-tabulation of LES/NES with LANGUAGE PROBLEM IN CLASS showed that more than 90 percent of those with fluent English expected no problems in the classroom, 54 percent of those with limited English expected none or slight problems, 30 percent expected moderate problems, and only 14 percent expected great or excessive problems. The data on those with no English are more difficult to interpret both because the N is small and because 41 percent were evidently unwilling or unable to talk about their problems. Of those who were, 9 percent indicated they expected no problems in class, 9 percent expected moderate problems, 14 percent expected great problems, and 27 percent excessive problems. These data are a little puzzling, as one would expect a smaller percentage (if any) to anticipate no or only moderate problems. The exception would be those students in programs specifically designed for non-English speaking students. It is not possible to draw inferences about the response of those who did not respond to the question.

From the data available, it seems that anticipated classroom language difficulty is a major deterrent to the entrance of non-English speaking students to community colleges. In the second year of the study, it will be possible to report in more detail on what has happened to these students, whether they have remained in college and, if so, what success they have had in their studies.

DISPLACED HOMEMAKER STUDENTS

Displaced homemakers were defined as those who were forced by circumstance (e.g., divorce, widowhood) back into the job market after

a long period of homemaking. A total of 237, or approximately 2 percent, of the women in the Sample were so identified. Of these, 73 said that they had a problem.

Displaced homemakers reported the following kinds of problems:

1. Finances.
2. Difficulties in combining home and school tasks.
3. Baby-sitter difficulties and expense.
4. Difficulty in paying enough attention to children.
5. Lack of understanding from counselors.

NONTRADITIONAL MAJOR

Nontraditional major students were identified as those students who were in a major which was unusual for one of their sex (e.g., female welding students, male secretaries). Interviewers were told to use "middle-America" standards in making their judgments. It was also suggested to them that if a sex title was likely to be added to an occupation (e.g., male nurse, woman truck driver), it was a sign that the person in the occupation was in a nontraditional program.

Of the more than six thousand students responding, only 173, or 3 percent, reported that they were in majors which were nontraditional for their sex. Only 9 of those stated that they were experiencing problems; one student declined to state.

The comments made by those students covered the following topics:

1. One student stated that nontraditional major status was advantageous in that extra attention was received.
2. Some stated that they received peer pressure against attempting a nontraditional major.
3. A few stated that student attitudes were offensive.
4. One male student (in nursing) complained that the men's restroom was too far away. This would appear to be a problem with single-purpose buildings (e.g., auto shop)

where the architect has assumed only one sex will be in attendance.

GENERAL PROBLEMS

Some problems mentioned by the "problem groups" appeared to be general in nature, rather than specific to a particular group. These were:

1. Counselors give incomplete advice.
2. Registration counseling is too cursory, too mechanical. Counselors at registration do not take much time or trouble with students.
3. Counselors are usually busy or unavailable.
4. More publicity should be given to the availability of counselors.
5. Counselors do not explain class content well.

OTHER FINDINGS

For many large-scale studies there are findings that, though not related to the formal goals of the study, are interesting in themselves, and may have greater import than those related to formal goals. Though not related to the stated goals, serendipitous results are reported below. They have intrinsic value and they are considered of sufficient value to be included in the second year of the study.

Many of these findings are based upon clinical observation, or the impressions formed by the project coordinators from reports of their interviewers and from their own interviewing experience. One must interpret these with caution since they have not been validated in any rigorous sense. Some of these findings bear on the Sample members themselves and their relationship to their community college. Others arise from data collection and have import for the type of

research being conducted and the gathering of information through telephone interview.

STUDENT PROFILES

Some "Conventional Wisdom" states that the community college population consists of 18-year-olds who come to community college for two years to learn a trade and then leave. Other "Conventional Wisdom" states that "Community college students are older these days." The latter statement does not appear to conform to the former. It became apparent in the Pierce College Longitudinal Study that:

1. The bulk of community college students are under 21 years of age, the modal age of first-admittees is 18, the median of all students is 24, the mean, which coincided with the 75th percentile, was 28 years of age; and

2. The heaviest academic loads are taken by the age group between 18 and 22 years of age.

The distribution of age, and the distribution of age by academic load both have a strong positive skew, with a long tail consisting of students of students who are over 30 years of age who seldom take more than one or two courses.

Furthermore, it seems that many community college students may be inconsistent in their attendance. They plan to select a course, attend, withdraw from college for a semester or two, and then perhaps return for another course. Additionally, there is clinical evidence that many of them do not appear to regard a grade as important, but enroll in classes to learn for personal reasons; some may not complete the course if their personal goals are satisfied part way through.

An attempt is being made, using case-study techniques, to develop student prototypes that defy usual classification methods because they

cut across the traditional descriptive criteria of age, sex, ethnicity, and major. The last is perhaps the most important because "major" does not appear to bear the same relationship to community college work that it does in the typical undergraduate college. Few students may be said to be pursuing a major in the traditional sense of the cohesive program. If community colleges are making useful contributions to the lives of Californians (and the large numbers of attendees make it appear that they are), it is important to be able to describe these contributions. The development of student prototypes is suggested as a means of identifying and describing the different facets of these contributions.

OBJECTIVES NOT MET IN THE FIRST SEMESTER/QUARTER

Because of the longitudinal nature of the study, certain of the objectives could not be met in the first year of the study. These are:

1C. To determine existing sex, race, or age bias in occupational programs.

Though information was collected on this objective, it cannot be said to have been met because such information might not be available until students have had more experience in their programs.

2A. To compare job success of vocational and nonvocational students after one, two and three years as measured by:

a. Rate of employment in field studied.

b. Skill level of job in field studied.

c. Salary of job in field studied.

Baseline data have been collected on this objective. Information on job status, hours of employment, and wages or salary will be collected in subsequent semesters/quarters, and comparisons will be made with baseline data over the life of the study.

In summary, these data indicate that 19 percent of the Sample reported that they were students, not employed, and 15 percent of the Sample reported that they held jobs requiring little or no skills. It is reasonable to assume that the 19 percent were also unskilled because they are recent high school graduates still living at home. Therefore, 35 percent of the Sample are unskilled. Of the remainder, 30 percent of the Sample reported holding semi-skilled jobs, 19 percent skilled jobs, and 6 percent said that they held professional or supervisory positions. Homemakers accounted for 8 percent of the Sample and "Other" 4 percent.

The mean hourly wage of students who held jobs was $4.25. Given the skewed age distribution, however, it is of interest to note that the modal wage was under $3.50. As reported above, the mean wage for males was $5.85, for females $4.52; the medians were $4.10 and $3.50 respectively. The modal wages were very close, probably a function of the age modality and the nature of the distribution itself. No pattern of differences between ethnic groups can be found.

In the ensuing years of the study, these data will be used for longitudinal comparisons to determine the extent to which community college education affects the earning capacity of students. These comparisons will be made for the Sample as a whole, for ethnic groups, and for men and women.

2B. To compare and contrast perceptions concerning the value of community college experience among students.

As with the previous two objectives, this information will not be available until students have had more experience in their programs.

5A. To provide detailed information emanating from the students themselves of the factors within the local education agencies that are perceived by LES/NES students to be discriminatory.

This objective has been met as completely as possible during the first semester. Additional data will be collected in subsequent semesters/quarters as students have more experience in their programs.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEW OBSERVATIONS

The data gatherers in this study work on campuses with a variety of ethnic and socioeconomic groups. As is already known, each campus has its own character. Foothill and Los Angeles Pierce have predominantly white, upper-middle-class students; Imperial Valley has a high percentage of Hispanic farmworkers; Los Angeles City serves a lower-middle-class socioeconomic group, many of whom are ethnic minority members. In addition to these obvious differences, there are characteristics which arise from problems of data collection, characteristics which appeared to be more a function of the prevailing climate in a given area. Certain kinds of problems seemed to be specific to particular campuses. It is possible that these difficulties have to do with the dynamics of the project coordinator on that campus, but because the difficulties occurred across the telephone interviewers on that campus, this variable probably can be discounted.

In Santa Ana College, for example, interviewers had much trouble with "suspicion" of telephone interviewers. This was particularly evident if the person answering the telephone was the parent or spouse of the Sample student. In a high percentage of cases, the person answering the telephone questioned the interviewer closely, and in a few cases was unwilling to allow the interviewer to talk to the respondent.

On some campuses, the level of sophistication was so low that interviewers had to be careful about their language. At Antelope Valley, for example, when one woman was asked what ethnic group she belonged to, she replied, "I'll have you know I don't belong to <u>any</u> of those perverted religious groups."

Generally speaking, the 17-20 age group were the most cooperative respondents. Across all campuses, interviewers remarked that the older the respondent, the more reticent he or she appeared to be, especially with respect to his or her earning power. Younger students appeared quite willing to report earnings.

There was a great deal of difficulty on campuses with a high percentage of lower-socioeconomic-level students and, on certain special campuses, with respect to disconnected telephones, wrong numbers, and moving with no forwarding address. Contra Costa and Sacramento City, among others, both complained about this problem. Part of the problem appears be that out-of-district students will give in-district addresses and telephone numbers so that they can attend without penalty. This was a particular problem at Cerritos which has a vocation program not duplicated elsewhere in the area.

Usually, female interviewers were more successful than male. Except on those campuses where suspicion was high and the respondent's parent or wife answered, women seemed to do better in getting information, and were often more careful in their record-keeping than men.

Rate of pay as it related to the quality of interviewers was a major problem. Many project coordinators were unable to hire above the minimum wage, and found that 19- and 20-year-old interviewers lacked the maturity and sensitivity to do reliable interviewing. Other found themselves unable to hire older students because workers had to be full-time students and most older students (25 and older) take lighter loads.

Several campus coordinators reported that students tended to be flattered by the call, and were happy that "someone was taking an

interest in them." The evidence is that this personal touch was regarded as positive by these students.

Generally, an interviewer could not make more than 12 attempted contacts per hour; of these, seldom did more than 3 result in a completed interview. In general, it takes about 3 attempts to make contact with a respondent. Other calls result in no answer, a busy signal, or information that the respondent is out. Only about 30 percent of those whose parents or spouse say they will call back actually do so.

College coordinators reported that lower-middle-class students were difficult to reach. Frequently, they appear to give telephone numbers of friends or have no telephone. They also appear to move frequently and to be difficult or impossible to trace once they have moved.

CONCLUSION

Given the number of variables collected for the study reported on these pages, it is obvious that no more than the surface has been scratched, no more than a small percentage of the potential analyses have been done on this data. As has already been noted, aggregating day and evening students, for example, gives an erroneous picture of the work done by community colleges because day and evening students constitute two very different populations.

Part II of this report will include comparison of the population across this variable (day vs. evening attendance), as well as a report on much of the Spring 1979 data not available for analysis at this time.

Data to be collected in the second year of the study will include further examination of employment variables, follow-up on students who are and are not in attendance in Fall 1979, information on academic history of all Sample Students (e.g., G.P.A.) and follow-up on a number other variables (e.g., use made of counseling office). In addition, more definitive work will be done on the seven special groups, with respect to problems which they have encountered, solutions which they have devised, and use which they have made of campus assistance agencies (e.g., women's centers, financial aid offices, EOPS offices).

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